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To: Microsoft ATR,mpowell@fcc.gov@inetgw,kabernat@fcc....
Date: 1/19/02 3:00pm
Subject: MSN Broadband and QWest partnership problems

I have been a QWest DSL/ISP customer for a couple of years. In December QWest sent notification that all customers must migrate to MSN Broadband with a deadline in January 2002.

No choices were offered for other ISPs. No mention was even made that you could have QWest DSL with a 3rd party ISP.

I selected the MSN migration. Surprisingly (sarcasm), the migration process was automatic - no human intervention required, no delay in the changeover. But I experienced a few issues with the new service, none of which are explained.

1 - All outgoing email MUST go thru the MSN SMTP email server. Connection to any other SMTP server is blocked. This was not disclosed.

2 - SMTP access for outgoing mail is strictly by secured password authentication. This was not disclosed.

3 - The only email product I am aware of that has secured password authentication is... you guessed it - MS Outlook/Outlook Express. By the way, it should be obvious - this was not disclosed. I'm sure I never saw anything with the MSN migration information that said you must use Outlook.

These are just the technical issues. Even more important are the processes.

1 - Once migrated to MSN Broadband, MSN owns the entire account, including the DSL physical connection. This was not disclosed.

2 - Once migrated to MSN Broadband, you cannot change ISPs. You must completely cancel the MSN Broadband. This was not disclosed.

3 - When you cancel the MSN Broadband, you cannot immediately order different DSL service. This was not disclosed. This would seem to be beyond anti-competitive practices, and into if not illegal, definitely improper practices.

4 - Once the MSN Broadband is physically disconnected and DSL service is no longer active, YOU STILL CANNOT ORDER NEW SERVICE. You must wait until MSN finishes its paperwork, and no longer owns your account. This was not disclosed. Is there any doubt now that we are at the level of illegal practices?

5 - One MSN paperwork is completed, and MSN no longer owns your account, you must order new DSL service, and must wait approximately 10 business

days for DSL service. This was not disclosed. Although this may be reasonable for new service, it is not reasonable for an ISP change.

In summary, to change away from MSN Broadband to a different ISP, you must

1-cancel service (1/2/02)

2-wait for disconnect - about 1 week (1/9/02)

3-wait for paperwork - about 1 week (was told maximum of 10 bus. days from cancellation)

4-order new service (was told on 1/9/02 that once I could order, it would probably be about the end of January to get service up)

5-wait 2 weeks

In other words once you make the decision to change, you are stuck with MSN for one more week, then have three weeks or more without service.

Not only is all this anti-competitive, but they never told me ANY of this up front.

I would like to make a personal thank-you to Rick Gray at the QWest DSL Manager Escalation center for his assistance in getting my "new" order placed within a reasonable time in spite of the policies, and in escalating the actual installation.

Microsoft's steps and objectives are plainly obvious. One must question QWest's new practice of turning complete ownership of DSL service over to MSN. One must also blame QWest for not providing some of these details with the migration information.